



## SCOP VOLUNTEER TOURISM

This SOP outlines guidelines to ensure that all volunteer and project-based placement activities are designed and delivered in a legal, safe, ethical, and socially and environmentally responsible manner, while creating meaningful, positive, and lasting benefits for host projects, local communities, and volunteers.

### **Guidelines**

1. Ensure applicable legal permits are in place, including at host projects.
2. Ensure insurance for participants & team is in place.
3. Identify health & safety risks, implement management systems & provide appropriate safety equipment.
4. Ensure enough team members are available in case of emergency.
5. Monitor activity area conditions (including weather) in advance & during the activity.
6. Conduct background checks for volunteer placements with vulnerable groups & only consider this when volunteers have relevant expertise.
7. Implement necessary safeguards for placements with vulnerable groups, including supervision & ensuring separate overnight accommodation for volunteers.
8. Prohibit placements where volunteers are primary caregivers at vulnerable group facilities.
9. Screen volunteers to make sure that placement is a match for their skills & interests.
10. Ensure continuity of program objectives after volunteer placements, e.g. through partnerships with existing initiatives.
11. Engage host project in design & management of volunteer program, including number & selection of volunteers.
12. Maximize local economic benefits through employment & purchasing.
13. Work with, not instead of, local people, ensuring skills transfer to host project.



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14. Provide transparency regarding proportion of total fee paid to host project.
15. Provide information in advance about the project's longer-term sustainability vision, activity accessibility, what to expect & what to bring.
16. Obtain written confirmation, e.g. via indemnity, from participants that they are aware of activity risks.
17. Brief participants about do's & don'ts, safety, what to expect, applicable etiquette / conduct to be respectful of & logistical considerations before the placement begins.
18. Share information about local nature, culture & social development / conservation projects that participants may want to support.
19. Provide meaningful placement content so that the experience is rewarding for all parties.
20. Provide local supervision / contact points for volunteers.
21. Avoid single use & disposable items, provide adequate waste collection facilities for safe disposal (or pack out what you take in) & pick up any rubbish found along the way.
22. Obtain feedback at end of placement debriefing.
23. Contribute to conserving activity area integrity; let relevant authorities / leadership know about any concerns & participate in rehabilitation projects.